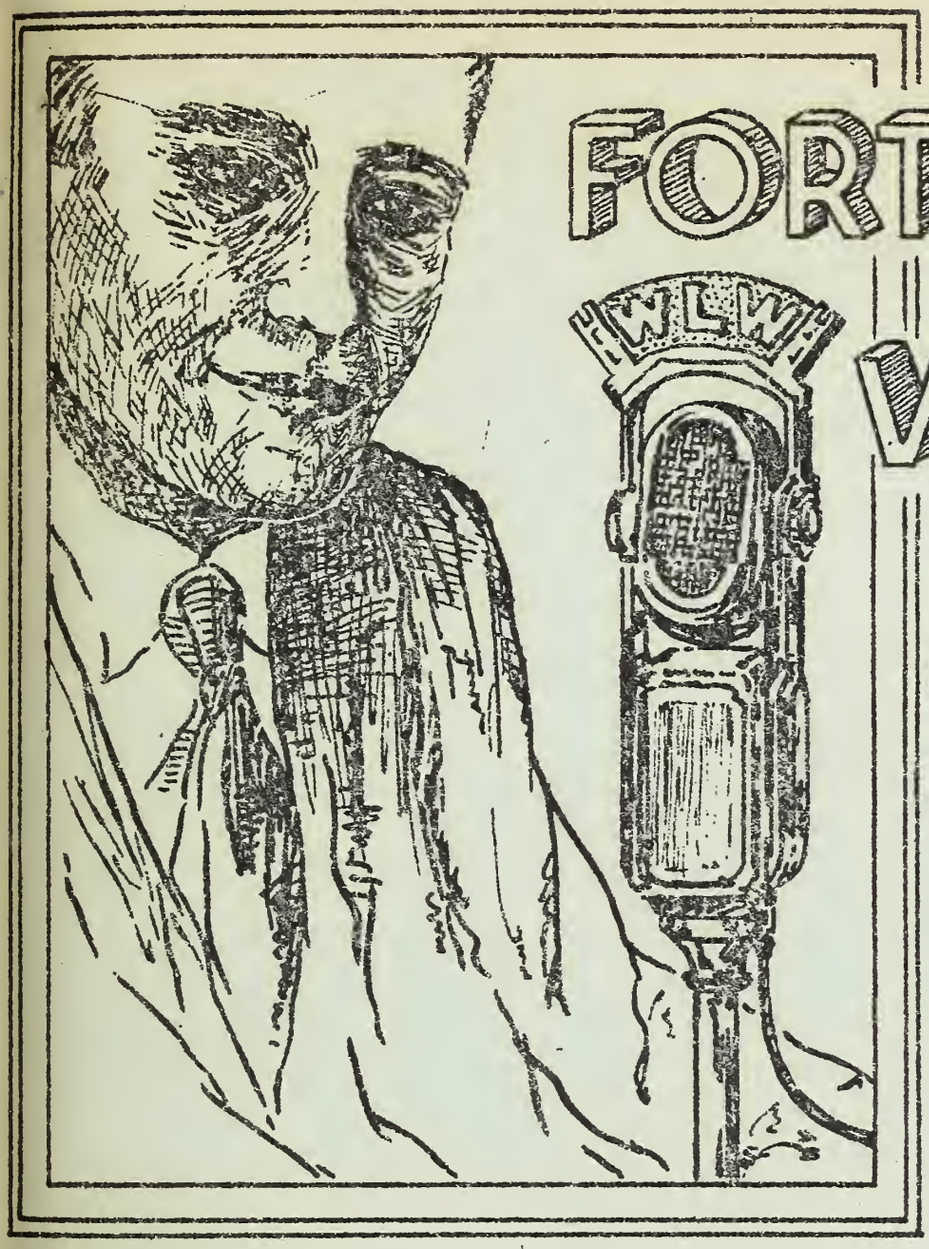

FORTUNES WASHED AWAY

A Series of Dramatizations of Better Land Use

No. 145 February 1, 1941 1:15 p.m.

"SWISS CHEESE"

W·L·W CINCINNATI

United States Department of Agriculture
Soil Conservation Service
Dayton · Ohio

SOUND: Whistling wind...

VOICE

Black blizzards across the plains.

SOUND OFF MIKE: Woman coughing...

SECOND VOICE

Biting wind!

VOICE

Choking dust.

SOUND: Up wind, set fire...

SECOND VOICE

Havoc...

VOICE

Destruction...

SECOND VOICE

Waste...

SOUND: Up wind, kill fire, set flood...

VOICE

Floods rushing down the great valleys.

VOICES IN UNISON

Floods, drowning, killing, wasting...

SOUND: Up wind...

VOICE

The wealth of America washing and blowing away--soil erosion!

SOUND: Clap of thunder...

ANNOUNCER

Swiss Cheese: the 145th consecutive episode of Fortunes Washed Away!

ORGAN THEME: DEEP RIVER.

ANNOUNCER

Long, long before butter was known, men made cheese--as early as fourteen hundred years before the birth of Christ. Homer, Aristotle, Hippocrates, Pliny--each mentions various methods of cheese production. Today, there are nearly two hundred kinds of cheese--the moldy green lines of Roquefort, the big red Edam, English cheddar, Italian Parmesan, Belgian Limberger, French Camembert.

ORGAN: SWISS MUSIC softly behind...

VOICE OF SWITZERLAND

And Swiss cheese. Most populous of the cantons of Switzerland is Berne Canton, in the Jura and Alps ranges. This is an agricultural canton, and one of the best cultivated cantons of all Switzerland. We grow grain and fruit in the valleys of the Rhine, the Aar, and the Emmen. On the mountainsides we grow pastures and meadows--and that means cattle, and cattle mean milk, and swiss cheese. We, the Swiss, eat cheese for breakfast, cheese in the afternoon, cheese for dinner. Swiss cheese originated in Berne Canton, in the valley of the Emmen--and our most popular cheese is the Emmenthaler.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT. PAUSE. THEN OHIO MUSIC softly behind...

VOICE OF OHIO

We make cheese in Ohio, too...and Swiss cheese leads all other kinds in production. Up in the valleys and hills of the mighty Muskingum River--home of the far-famed Muskingum Conservancy District, in the counties of Holmes, Coshocton, and Tuscarawas--you'll find the center of this industry. The name Tuscarawas means "ancient place" and it has been many years since Swiss and Germans settled there to begin this industry. Farmers and cheese makers work together, there, in giving Swiss cheese to the nation.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER

It takes good milk to make good Swiss cheese, and it takes careful management to farm the rolling hills of Tuscarawas County. W. J. Troendley, of Stone Creek, is a good farmer, as his green pastures show. Last week, Troendley was justified in pausing from his chores long enough to look back upon thirty years of farming. The scene is the comfortable living room of a large brick farmhouse overlooking "Troendley's Grove." The family had just finished supper...

ROSE

Well, I'd better get after those dishes.

Troendley

Now, mother, you let Mary Catherine do the dishes tonight. Let's just sit here and talk a few minutes.

ROSE

But you have to look after the cattle yourself.

TROENDLEY

Elmer and Edwin are out there, and I'll help them in a minute.

ROSE

What's on your mind tonight, memories?

TROENDLEY

Oh, I don't know, mother. I was just glancing at this farm journal, and I got to thinking about how times have changed. It's been a long time since we were married and moved here on the home place.

ROSE

Yes, it has...thirty years that have seen the farm grow and prosper. Years that have seen us change from...shall we say, ambitious youngsters, into mature farm folks, with a family of fine children. They are fine children, father.

TROENDLEY

I wouldn't trade one of them for the best Holstein-Fresian heifer in the state!

ROSE (WITH MOCK INDIGNATION)

Well, I like that! At least there's something you care more about that your precious cattle!

TROENDLEY (LAUGHING)

After all, it's the cattle that we have to thank for building up the farm. (SERIOUSLY) You know, Rose..it's a pity grandfather couldn't see the place today.

ROSE

He must have been a remarkable man...like your own father.

TROENDLEY

Yes, he was. Dad used to tell me about him. One time, a couple of years or so before we were married, dad and I were getting ready to turn under some clover. We were fixing an old turning plow, and we got to talking about the farm...(FADE)

SOUND: Hammer striking plowshare several times...

FATHER

Now hand me that bolt.

TROENDLEY

Here.

FATHER

Now hold it.

SOUND: Hammer strikes several more times, then one last loud blow...

FATHER

There! That ought to hold. Now maybe we can get after that poor field and see if we can't build it up.

TROENDLEY

"Poor field." That's the best name I know for it.

FATHER

That's what we've always called it, ever since I can remember. Even your grandfather.

TROENDLEY

Grandfather never turned under clover on it, either.

FATHER

No, I guess not. You see, when he came to this place from Baden, Germany, the farm was in fairly good shape. And what a worker he was! Why, he burned the brick for the home place.

TROENDLEY

But he was a good farmer, wasn't he?

FATHER

Yes, about as good as they came in those days. But they didn't know some of the things we know now. And when he began to rent it out to different people, well...like your brother Dennis said, people just farmed it too much.

TROENDLEY

And that's why you went in for dairy farming.

FATHER

That's one reason. The land wasn't making any corn. Then they put in this cheese factory down the road, so we have an outlet for the milk. When your grandfather died, I moved here and saw what the renters had done. When that cheese factory came, that made up my mind to put as much of the land as possible in pasture, and raise high quality milk instead of corn nubbins. Do you know much about Swiss cheese, son?

TROENDLEY

I know it has to have "eyes."

FATHER

Absolutely! Cheese without eyes is like doughnuts without holes. And the size of the eyes is important, too. They should be just large enough for a cherry to slip through. The eyes should be evenly distributed, and they should have a glossy surface. But here--why I am telling you all this? We're not going to make cheese. We're going to make milk!

TROENDLEY

Oh, that reminds me, dad...I was reading a bulletin from the experiment station the other day. A bulletin about lime. I wrote for more information about it.

FATHER

Lime? Why, I've never used lime in my life, nor your grandfather either.

TROENDLEY

Maybe that's why some of the land is so poor. Maybe that's why we don't always get a good catch of clover. Anyhow, dad...I think we ought to give lime a chance to see what it will do. Maybe it will be the turning point...(FADE)

ROSE (FADING IN)

...and from what I've seen and heard, that was the turning point in the farm.

TROENDLEY

Yes, that year we put lime on the soybeans and the wheat, and they were much better. We put it on one of the pastures, and it was the best we had ever had. That convinced both me and dad that it pays to use lime and fertilizer.

ROSE

And that was only two years before we were married and moved here. That would make it...1911.

TROENDLEY

Yes, we were married in 1913.

ROSE

As if I didn't remember.

TROENDLEY

Then mother died that fall. It seemed like the whole world had changed, especially to dad who had worshipped her. He was pretty much broken up, and one day he came to me....(FADE)

DAD

Son, how would you like to buy the home place?

TROENDLEY

Why, dad...of course I'd like to. This farm has been in the family a long time, and I want to do my part to keep it. It'll take time to pay for it.

DAD

Never mind. You're a good farmer, and you know how to run things. And Rose will be a lot of help to you.

TROENDLEY

But you'll be here to help me, of course.

DAD

No, my boy...I'm going away. Not far, but away from here. Ever since your mother passed on, this doesn't seem like the same place.

TROENDLEY

Why, dad! Where are you going.

DAD

I've bought a little 40-acre farm a few miles away. There's an old cheese factory there, and I plan to remodel it into a dwelling. That'll be my place from now on. This will be yours. No, son...the home place doesn't seem the same anymore. But you keep it good...build it up...(FADE)

TROENDLEY (FADING IN)

...and no matter how much you and I argued, dad stuck to his plans. Well, mother, we've gone a long way since then.

ROSE

Yes, we have. It looks nice to go out over the farm, and see the pastures, and the fine cattle, and all of those crazy-looking strips you've been laying out the last few years.

TROENDLEY

They may look crazy, but they look right to me. They're holding down the soil on what little cultivated land we have. But the pastures and the cattle for me--pastures and cattle in the Swiss cheese country.

ROSE

It sounds silly, I suppose, but it makes me feel proud to know that when people right here in the United States eat Swiss cheese--hundreds of them, not knowing it, will be eating cheese made from the W. J. Troendley farm.

ORGAN: Sneak in DEEP RIVER.

TROENDLEY

There's more to it than that, mother. We buy lime by the carload. Without lime you can't grow legumes. Without legumes you can't grow cattle. Without cattle you can't get milk. And it takes good milk to make good cheese.

ROSE

And it takes a good farmer to do what you've done. You're a conservation farmer.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER

That is the true story of W. J. Troendley, conservation farmer of Tuscarawas County, Ohio. And now, once again we turn to the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and here is Ewing Jones.

JONES

Thanks, John Cornell. As Lester A. Kronin, county agricultural agent in Tuscarawas County would say, it does take good milk to make good cheese, and he'll tell you that they make good cheese up there. In fact, the "grinders", or second-grade cheese, are becoming less common every year.

ANNOUNCER

And even though Mr. Troendley isn't a manufacturer himself, he's a mighty important cog in the wheel of the industry.

JONES

And a mighty fine farmer. He and his wife have raised a fine family, too...Sedilia, Earl, Elmer, Edwin, Mary Catherine, and Carl. Well, to get on with his farming experiences, not long ago the Ohio Agricultural Extension Service, in cooperation with the Soil Conservation Service, began to look for some farmer in that community whose farm might be used as a "demonstration farm"--a showcase, or an example of what can be done if soil-saving methods are used. R. L. Bazler--he's manager of the Ohio State University farms now--Bazler helped him lay out his first strip cropping. Mr. Troendley doesn't need further help--he lays out his own strips. He raises Holstein-Fresian cattle, all registered, selling his milk to a nearby cooperative dairying association. In fact, he's an all-around good farmer.

ANNOUNCER

We mustn't forget, Ewing...that he was one of the early advocates of agricultural limestone in his community.

JONES

That's right, John...and have you seen this new bulletin on liming?

ANNOUNCER

No, I haven't. May I?

JONES

Here, take a look. Twenty-six well-illustrated pages on the liming of soils.

ANNOUNCER

Say, that looks all right...plenty of information there.

JONES

There is, and copies of the new Farmers' Bulletin, "Liming", may be obtained without cost by writing to Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio.

ANNOUNCER

Ewing, this bulletin has me intrigued, and I'm going to go a bit farther in that announcement. Friends, this new bulletin, "Liming", really has plenty of information. It tells why lime is needed, and when it is needed. It contains a chapter on the time and method of applying lime. It tells about the effects of liming. Of course, lime may be applied at any time of the year--but many farmers are getting ready to apply lime to sour soils this spring, and this bulletin will be mighty handy for them. So, if you would like a copy of the illustrated bulletin, "Liming", drop a letter or a penny postcard to Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio. The address again, Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio, and ask for the free bulletin, "Liming."

JONES

Thanks, John, and I'm glad you're so enthusiastic about this bulletin. Well, here's a bit of news in the conservation world. Last Saturday, farmers in six Kentucky counties voted to see whether or not they wanted to form soil conservation districts. One county, Daviess, said no...and that's the beauty of the districts movement. It's of the farmers, by the farmers, and for the farmers, and it's up to them to say whether or not they want to form their own district. Five counties said yes--Grant, Gallatin, Graves, Carlisle, and Hickman--so soil conservation-minded farmers in Kentucky take another step toward saving this land of ours.

ORGAN THEME: DEEP RIVER.

JONES (on cue)

Remember, if you want the illustrated bulletin on liming, write to Soil Conservation, Dayton, Ohio. This is Ewing Jones speaking for the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture...and goodbye now, until next week at this same time, when we bring you another story of "Fortunes Washed Away."

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

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